

Message Text

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ACTION EPA-04

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, CCMS, OVIP, GR

SUBJECT: ANALYSIS OF CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES IN WESTERN
EUROPE; VISIT OF EPA OFFICIALS

REF: STATE 216476

1. PRIORITY ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CURRENTLY FACING LOCAL OFFICIALS
AND LIKELY TO BE RAISED IN DISCUSSIONS WITH EPA ADMINISTRATOR
DOUGLAS COSTLE AND DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR BARBARA BLUM INCLUDE:
(A) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT, (B) ENVIRONMENTAL
LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT, (C) COASTAL WATER QUALITY PROTECTION,
(D) PROTECTION OF COASTAL ZONES AGAINST OIL POLLUTION, (E) AIR
POLLUTION CONTROL IN CITIES, (F) LAND-USE PLANNING AS RELATED TO
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY, (G) DISPOSAL AND RE-USE OF SOLID WASTE,
AND (H) COMMUNITY NOISE CONTROL.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS CURRENTLY RECEIVING WIDE PUBLICITY
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IN GREEK PRESS REFER TO THE (A) UNSATISFACTORY ATHENS SEWAGE
COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL SYSTEM, (B) QUALITY OF URBAN AIR,
(C) EFFECT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES, (D) QUALITY OF MARINE ENVIRONMENT,
(E) INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENT DISPOSAL, (F) PROTECTION OF FORESTS AGAINST
FIRE, AND (G) PROTECTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS (THE
ACROPOLIS IN PARTICULAR) AGAINST AIR POLLUTANTS, ESPECIALLY
SULFUR DIOXIDE.

3. PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN 1976 IN GREECE TOWARDS IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL IS REFLECTED IN BANNING THE USE OF HIGH SULFUR CONTENT HEAVY FUEL OIL FOR DOMESTIC HEATING; INTRODUCING LEGISLATION DESIGNED TO PROVIDE THE ORGANIZATIONAL SET-UP OF THE GOG ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MECHANISM; INTRODUCING MEASURES AIMED AT REDUCING AIR AND NOISE POLLUTION BY MOTOR VEHICLES IN THE CAPITAL AREA; ESTABLISHING REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION BOARDS UNDER THE VARIOUS NOMARCHIES; INTRODUCING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION REQUIREMENTS IN CONTRACTS GOVERNING ESTABLISHMENT AND/OR EXPANSION OF INDUSTRIAL UNITS; ESTABLISHING RULES DESIGNED TO PROTECT THE MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL OF GREEK PORTS; AND TAKING MEASURES FOR COMMUNITY NOISE ABATEMENT.

4. THERE HAS BEEN A RAPIDLY INCREASING INTENSITY IN GOVERNMENTAL ACTION AIMED AT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY GOALS AND POLLUTION CONTROL STRATEGIES ARE, HOWEVER, BEING DEFINED AT A RATHER SLOW PACE CHIEFLY BECAUSE OF THE LACK, UNTIL RECENTLY, OF AN AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATING THE OPERATIONS OF VARIOUS GOG DEPARTMENTS WHICH ENGAGE IN ENVIRONMENTAL

PROTECTION WORK

5. GREECE MAY BENEFIT FROM U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE IN BUILDING UP ITS OWN NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND/OR STANDARDS. TRAINING OF GREEK
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NATIONALS IN THE UNITED STATES MAY ALSO CONTRIBUTE IN THE CREATION OF A PROFESSIONAL CADRE WHICH IS A BASIC ELEMENT IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND PROGRAM. FINALLY, U.S. POLLUTION CONTROL EQUIPMENT AND APPARATUS MAY PROVE OF GREAT ASSISTANCE IN SOLVING GREECE'S ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS.

6. THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN GREECE'S ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SECTOR HAS BEEN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION SERVICE AT THE MINISTRY OF COORDINATION. THIS SERVICE, WHICH IS HEADED BY PROFESSOR MARINOS GEROULANOS, HAS BEEN ASSIGNED POLICY MAKING AND COORDINATION RESPONSIBILITIES

7. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE BEING INFORMED OF EPA OFFICIALS' TRAVEL PLANS IN THE HOPE THAT GREECE MIGHT BE INCLUDED IN THEIR ITINERARIES.
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